

Last month the JOURNAL referred to the pamphlet issued by the Marine Hospital Service on the subject of the new Pharmacopeia. We wish again to refer to the same document, and call attention to another group of remedies

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

about which there seems to be a considerable amount of confusion in the physician's mind. At page 40 of this official document we find "Hexamethylenamina," the new Pharmacopeial name for hexamethylene-tetramine, and we read that it is "also known as *aminoform*, *ammonio-formaldehyde*, *cystamine*, *cystogen*, *formin*, *uritone* and *urotropin*"; at least two more may be added—*hexa-cystine* and *formamine*. In other words, we are informed by this official document, that all of these fancifully named remedies are one and the same chemical—hexamethylene-tetramine — and that whether you write for urotropin, formin, cystogen or any other of these names is immaterial; your patient will take the chemical, hexamethylene-tetramine. A serious objection has been urged to the new Pharmacopeial name given to this chemical; it is too long to be remembered, and cannot well be abbreviated without danger of confusion. The objections are reasonably good, but they do not apply to a simple abbreviation of the chemical name—*hexam.-tet.* The chemical name so abbreviated is easy to remember, is definitely descriptive, is not at all liable to be confused with any other abbreviation, and should be generally used. Just so long as physicians will continue to prescribe this chemical under its various fanciful names, just so long will they continue to indicate their own ignorance of their materia medica and their superlative faith in the prejudiced statements of the various detail men. And moreover, just so long will they continue to make the pharmacist pay a high price for medical ignorance, for they will continue to compel him to carry in stock a number of trade-brands of the same identical chemical. Is that right? It has been urged that the trade name given to a remedy of this sort by the manufacturer first introducing it should be used exclusively, so that he might get the benefit of his outlay in time and money in perfecting the discovery. There is certainly some justice in this claim, and it could be conceded were it not for the practices of manufacturers themselves. One of them will discover and introduce a chemical of this sort, and it will soon be found to have certain valuable medicinal properties. Immediately a number of other manufacturers will make the same thing, and market it each under a different and also fanciful name, and each claim that his preparation has distinct and unique qualities not possessed by any other substance under heaven. If they were content to market their products under definite and recognized names—either chemical or arbitrary names—and to depend for sales upon the quality of the goods, reputation of the manufacturer, price of the product, etc., all would be well. But this they do not do, and consequently there seems to be no honorable course open to the conscientious physician

save to disregard them all and prescribe the remedy under its pharmacopeial or chemical name; in this particular instance *hexam.-tet.* would seem to be the easiest, and it certainly is as short and as easily remembered as any of the trade names under which the chemical is marketed. Why not follow the Pharmacopeia for a while and see how it works?

From present indications the 17th edition of the Official Register and Directory of Physicians

OFFICIAL REGISTER.

will be distributed during this month of October. During the past year every effort has been made to correct the data contained in the book and to bring the addresses up to date, yet there are still a considerable number of names in the "address unknown" list. Once more we earnestly call upon each and every member of the Society to aid us in this work and to keep us posted as to the movements of physicians. If a doctor moves into your vicinity, let us know about it; it will take only a few seconds of your time, and it will make the Register just so much more useful and valuable. Please look through the "address unknown" list and advise us at once if you know the present correct address of any physicians in that list. Remember that this Register, like the JOURNAL, is your own property, and that as such you should take an interest in it and endeavor to aid us in making it accurate. Criticisms and suggestions are more than welcome—they are desired. The general scheme of last year has been followed in the present volume, and seems to satisfy all practical demands. If you do not receive your Register by the early part of November, let us know.

There is an exactness of diction and an accuracy in the observance of all superficial things

A LAST WORD ON ACCURACY.

in life which to some people is all important. Thus we see our amiable friend Mr. Rockefeller observe with a marvelous degree of exactness all the outward and visible ordinances of the religion which he professes, while at the same time he is reported to regard it as a crime to himself if he allows the victim of a business deal to escape with a single dollar that might have been extracted. One may also read learned and scholarly editorials in some medical journals, defining exactly the meaning of a Greek root, or setting forth with commendable accuracy those things which fall within "commercialism" and those characteristics of pure "professionalism"—and in the same journal discover that "professionalism" has been seduced by "commercialism," and that its advertising pages help to promote the use of such things as *chionia*; *ergoapiol*; *antikamnia*, etc. But this exact adherence to the letter and absolute disregard of the spirit of the law, does not appeal to us. Your JOURNAL, under the guidance of your Publication Committee, began an active war against certain well-defined abuses